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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

114th completing mission and community service in Kyrgyzstan

By Jasper DesLauriers

RAPID CITY, S.D. - The 114th Security Forces Squadron of the South Dakota Air National Guard currently deployed to Manas Air Base in Kyrgyzstan is providing security for all personnel and resources on base, while also volunteering and improving the lives of the Kyrgyz people.

The 114th mission is to provide force protection for U.S., French and Spanish troops currently deployed to Manas Air Base, as well as transient personnel moving through the base to or from Afghanistan. Its mission also includes providing security for resources, both facilities and aircraft.

Along with the 114th, the base security force is made up of National Guard units from Alaska, Ohio, New York, Mississippi, and Tennessee, as well as active-duty military working dog handlers.

"A typical day for the 114th consists of 12 to 14 hour shifts," said Capt. Joseph Hardin of Brookings, S.D. "We do personnel entry control points, proactively monitor and patrol all areas of the base and flight line, and respond to any incidents."

Hardin continued on how some members of the 114th spend their free time volunteering in Kyrgyzstan.

Members that volunteer belong to a non-profit, private organization called Manas Air Base Outreach Society. It supports 10 humanitarian organizations in the greater Bishkek area including foundations for the elderly, orphanages and medical facilities for children.

"While Airmen have limited personal time, many chose to spend their free time performing community service," said Hardin. "We do similar things in our communities back home; while we're deployed, Kyrgyzstan is our community."

Staff Sgt. Ryan McNamara of Hartford, S.D., said that the reaction of those he helps is fulfilling.

"It's great to see the smiles on the faces of the children and how they showed their great appreciation of what we do for them," said McNamara. "It makes it all worth it!"

Airmen also volunteer in the local villages surrounding the base. Squadrons are paired up with communities in a 'village partnership program.' Working with the mayors, Airmen visit with village children or elderly and participate in community renovation projects.

The 376th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, the deployed unit for the 114th SFS, is aligned with Oktyabrskoye Village.

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Photo Cut Line: The squadron visited the Oktyabrskoye Village on May 30 as part of the village's recognition of International Protection Day, which is June 1, Staff Sgt. Ryan McNamara (center) and other security forces members delivered gift bags to some of the less fortunate of the village. The gift bags included T-shirts, toys, towels, candy, and coloring books. The items were purchased with money allocated from the private organizations on base and with donations from home units of the security forces members. (U.S. Air Force Photo by Staff Sgt. Tabitha Kuykendall) (RELEASED)

Link to Photo: <https://sdguard.ngb.army.mil/released/080530-F-0232K-156.jpg>

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